



Edward Hopper: An Intimate Biography

By Gail Levin



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"A definitive biography." Robert Hughes, *Time* "A nearly flawless account of a remarkable artist . . . a compelling and accessible narrative for anyone even remotely interested in modern American art." Michael Kammen, *The New York Times Book Review* This acclaimed biography of Edward Hopper is essential reading for anyone interested in the world-famous realist artist. This second, expanded edition doubles the number of illustrations, and includes a new section of paintings in color. A newly added section on Hopper's international influence on culture, especially on contemporary art, poetry, and cinema, makes this edition unique. The original biography (*Edward Hopper: An Intimate Biography*, Knopf, 1995) has long been considered the seminal review of Edward Hopper's life and work. The biography's focus is the laconic, introverted painter's stormy forty-three-year marriage to outspoken and gregarious Josephine ("Jo") Nivison, herself an artist, and draws extensively on Jo Hopper's intimate diaries, which she kept from the early 1930s until shortly before her death in 1968 (just 10 months after her husband died).

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

This remarkable biography throws Hopper's art and life into sharp new perspective. Its focus is the laconic, introverted painter's stormy 43-year marriage to outspoken, gregarious Josephine ("Jo") Nivison, herself an artist. Levin, art professor at Baruch College and the City University of New York graduate school, draws extensively on Jo Hopper's intimate diaries, which she kept from the early 1930s until shortly before her death in 1968 (just 10 months after her husband died). Through diary entries, we learn that Hopper ridiculed, degraded and occasionally beat or bruised his wife, that he refused to let her drive their car, that he thwarted her career even as she devotedly helped him find subjects to paint. Nevertheless, as his model, intellectual peer and fellow artist, she stimulated his creativity, and, according to Levin, they became partners and conspirators in a domestic drama of deep attraction and violent opposition that fed his disquieting vision of modern life. Illustrated throughout with photographs as well as scores of reproductions of both Hoppers' paintings and drawings.

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From Library Journal

Hopper's cool portrayals of American life transcend photographic realism and, like the oft-reproduced and -parodied "Nighthawks," have become icons of despair and a remote hope. This thorough work is by necessity a dual biography of Hopper and Josephine Nivison Hopper, the artist's wife of nearly 50 years. By relying on the diaries and letters of Jo, Levin has depicted the antagonistic symbiosis of the couple's marriage. Jo Hopper was an untiring though not uncomplaining advocate of her husband's art and the female model for the characters in most of his great works. Hopper is depicted as a misogynist who takes every opportunity to thwart his wife's already frustrated though not wholly unsuccessful painting career. Living up to the "intimate" of the subtitle, Levin's biography has taken advantage of her sources to create a detailed and monumental ledger of the genesis and creation of Hopper's modern masterpieces. Levin, the author of numerous works on Hopper (including the recent *Edward Hopper: A Catalogue Raisonné*, Norton, 1995), has carefully balanced the artistic and personal lives of the Hoppers. Recommended for all art and biography collections. Martin R. Kalfatovic, Smithsonian Inst. Libs., Washington, D.C.

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From [Booklist](#)

Hopper's reticence was legendary, so Levin, a Hopper scholar, turned to the diaries of Hopper's far more loquacious wife, Jo, for insights into their very private life and discovered that Jo was essential to the creation of Edward's art. Levin's biography is, therefore, a double portrait. Edward and Jo were collaborators, soul mates, and adversaries for 45 productive if anguished years. Edward was an artist practically from birth, and Jo, an unusually independent young woman for her time, was also a painter, but once she married Edward, she sacrificed her art for his. Edward was as ruthlessly selfish as he was talented, as coldly competitive as he was brilliant. Jo posed for every female figure Edward painted, chronicled the making of every major work, and cajoled Edward out of his frequent slumps. Levin analyzes Edward's repressed and repressive personality and contentious marriage, then illuminates the sources of his powerful and provocative paintings and discusses his belief that art, in his words, "is one's effort to communicate to others one's emotional reaction to life and the world." That he did, with resounding success. *Donna Seaman*

Users Review

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Henry Major:

As people who live in the particular modest era should be up-date about what going on or data even knowledge to make these keep up with the era and that is always change and move forward. Some of you maybe can update themselves by reading books. It is a good choice for you but the problems coming to you actually is you don't know what one you should start with. This Edward Hopper: An Intimate Biography is our recommendation to help you keep up with the world. Why, as this book serves what you want and want in this era.

Alberta Smith:

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